

United States Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

Decision Record Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-UT-W010-2013-0012-EA

September 2013

August 2013 Oil and Gas Lease Sale

Location: West Desert District
Salt Lake Field Office

Applicant/Address: U.S. Department of the Interior
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DECISION RECORD
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It is my decision to select Alternative B - the Proposed Action, Leasing with Additional Protective Measures, from the August 2013 Oil and Gas Lease Sale environmental assessment (EA) (DOI-BLM-UT-W010-2013-0012-EA) prepared by the Salt Lake Field Office (FO). It is also my decision to issue leases, subject to the protective measures (lease stipulations and notices) identified in the EA and the Notice of Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale (NCLS) issued on May 17, 2013, for the following 35 parcels (65,727.350 acres): UT0813-005, UT0813-006, UT0813-007, UT0813-008, UT0813-009, UT0813-010, UT0813-011, UT0813-012, UT0813-013, UT0813-014, UT0813-015, UT0813-016, UT0813-017, UT0813-017A, UT0813-018, UT0813-019, UT0813-020, UT0813-022, UT0813-029, UT0813-031, UT0813-032, UT0813-034, UT0813-035, UT0813-036, UT0813-038, UT0813-039, UT0813-040, UT0813-041, UT0813-042, UT0813-043, UT0813-044, UT0813-045, UT0813-046, UT0813-048, and UT0813-070.

The protective lease stipulations and notices are listed in the EA at Appendix A.

This decision incorporates the documented results presented in the Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) for this lease sale. The FONSI found that leasing the parcels is not a major federal action and will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, individually or cumulatively with other actions in the general area. No environmental effects meet the definition of significance in context or intensity, as defined in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1508.27, or exceed those effects described in the Final Environmental Impact Statements prepared for the Pony Express (PE) Resource Management Plan (RMP) (1990, as amended and maintained) and the Box Elder (BE) RMP (1986, as amended and maintained).

Oil and gas leasing is a principal use of the public lands as identified in section 102(a) (12) and 103(1) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and leasing is conducted to meet requirements of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970, and the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act of 1987. The authority to make this decision is implemented in 43 CFR Part 3100 (Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing: General).

ALTERNATIVES

The EA considered three alternatives: Alternative A - Leasing Under the Existing Land Use Plans; Alternative B - the Proposed Action, Leasing with Additional Protective Measures; and Alternative C - No Action. Other action alternatives were not considered because the issues identified during scoping (internal) and public review periods did not indicate a need for additional alternatives or protective measures beyond those contained in the Proposed Action. Additional alternatives were not suggested by the public during a 30-day public comment period provided for the EA. The No Action alternative is considered and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparison.

In processing the expressions of interest (EOIs) filed with this office, BLM considered oil and gas leasing on approximately 244,332.555 acres (114 parcels) within the Salt Lake FO. Based upon a lease parcel review process that was conducted in accordance with the

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Washington Office (WO) Instruction Memoranda (IM) No. 2010-117, *Oil and Gas Leasing Reform – Land Use Planning and Lease Parcel Review*, 178,605.205 acres were deferred from the August 2013 oil and gas lease sale. The deferral of 178,605.205 acres was necessary because of the presence of lands determined to possess wilderness characteristics, lands within the potential trail management corridor for the California National Historic Trail (NHT), lands within the US Magnesium Superfund Site or lands within a Military Munitions Response Program (MMRP) unit. Before oil and gas leasing can occur in the deferred areas, BLM must address its management of those areas with respect to lands with wilderness characteristics, the NHT, the US Magnesium Superfund Site and MMRP units through the land use planning process. Additional information regarding the deferred lands is documented in the Deferred Lands List.¹

The Proposed Action was selected because it best met the BLM's purpose and need for action. Offering of the subject parcels for competitive oil and gas leasing provides for the orderly development of fluid mineral resources under BLM's jurisdiction in a manner consistent with multiple use management and environmental consideration for the resources that may be present.

The EA ensures that adequate considerations and provisions were included in the lease terms, notices and stipulations in order to protect public health and safety and assure full compliance with the objectives of FLPMA, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), NEPA and other applicable federal laws and regulations designed to protect the environment and the multiple use management of public lands. The sale of oil and gas leases will assist in meeting the energy needs of the United States.

PLAN CONFORMANCE AND CONSISTENCY

The Proposed Action was reviewed and found to be in conformance with the decisions contained in the PE RMP and Record of Decision (ROD) (1990, as amended and maintained) and the BE RMP and ROD (1986, as amended and maintained) because it is specifically provided for in those planning decisions. The PE RMP and ROD categorizes all lands in Salt Lake, Utah and Tooele counties that are available for leasing, along with any applicable stipulations that would be attached to leases offered for certain areas (PE RMP, pages 23-24 and Mineral Map 1). The BE RMP and ROD categorizes all lands in Box Elder county that are available for leasing, along with any applicable stipulations that would be attached to leases offered for certain areas (BE RMP, pages 9-13 and Mineral Map 1).

The Proposed Action is consistent with the management decisions in both the PE RMP and ROD and the BE RMP and ROD, including the corresponding goals and objectives related to the management of, including but not limited to, air quality, cultural resources, recreation, riparian areas, soils, water, vegetation and fish and wildlife.

The EA was used to determine the necessary administrative actions, lease stipulations and notices, and other special conditions or restrictions that would be made a part of each

¹ Available online at:

http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/ut/lands_and_minerals/oil_and_gas/august_2013.Par.23572.File.dat/Deferred%20Lands.pdf

lease at the time of issuance. Under the Proposed Action, additional interdisciplinary support and consideration would be required to ensure on-the-ground implementation of planning objectives, lease stipulations and notices and applicable best management practices during the Application for Permit to Drill (APD) process.

Coordination and consultation, as required by WO IM 2010-117, the NHPA, the ESA and other applicable laws and regulations, with interested stakeholders, which included the general public, private landowners, Native American Tribes, the United States National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the United States Forest Service and the State of Utah's Division of Wildlife Resources, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), State Institutional Trust Lands Administration and Public Lands Policy Coordination Office, has occurred for the August 2013 oil and gas lease sale. Detailed information regarding stakeholder involvement, participation and consultation is documented in the EA at sections 1.6 and 5.0 – 5.3.1 and Appendix C – Interdisciplinary Team Checklist.

The EA (DOI-BLM-UT-C020-2012-035-EA) fulfills all of the requirements imposed by WO IM 2010-117.

Issuance of the NCLS initiated a 30-day public protest period, which ended on June 17, 2013. No protests were received for the August 2013 competitive oil and gas lease sale.

/s/ Kent Hoffman
Authorized Officer

9/30/2013
Date